Effect of drought on ARWSP

200. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there was setback to the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme in Andhra Pradesh and other parts of the country due to severe drought conditions prevailing during the current year;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(c) the remedial measures being taken by the Ministry in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Due to lack of monsoon, many States including Andhra Pradesh have been reported to be affected with drought conditions. The other affected States are Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttaranchal, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra.

(c) 85% of drinking water supply is met from the ground water which usually goes down in summer months but due to onset of monsoon the ground water is recharged and the problem is minimized. However, due to delayed monsoon further depletion of ground water is reported from affected areas. Necessity of transportation of water has been projected by some States, including Punjab, Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and Himachal Pradesh.

The drought situation is reviewed regularly by the Government of India. All the States were requested to prepare and implement contingency plan to overcome the distress situation for drinking water in rural areas and take action on the following points (I) Water transportation by road on train or both wherever required, (II) Deepening of existing open wells, (III) Flushing or fishing of existing bore wells, (IV) Sinking of new bore wells/ open wells and (V) Provision of Generator-Set or other support facilities required for maintaining water supply facilities for rural areas.

Out of the funds released by the Government of India under Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP), 15% can be utilized for operation and maintenance work. Out of 15% about 5% will be available for repair, rejuvenation, replacement, renovation, improvement of existing water supply sources and systems including borewells and open wells in the rural areas.

Sinking of the new-bore-wells can be taken up under the normal ARWSP scheme as per the priorities prescribed in the Guidelines. Further, the ARWSP Guidelines permit the State Government to provide water supply connections from the bore-wells constructed by the Central Ground Water Board.

From the current year, ARWSP guidelines have been amended and 5% of the total funds have been earmarked for mitigating the contingency arising due to natural calamities and emergent situation. Fund of Rs. 111.75 crore is available for this purpose which can be released to the States for mitigating the drinking water crisis. The Department of Drinking Water Supply has released funds from 5% of the ARWSP funds set apart for natural calamities and emergent conditions to 4 States namely Karnataka (Rs. 157.68 lakhs), Himachal Pradesh (Rs. 590.00 lakhs), Orissa (Rs. 311.25 lakhs) and Madhya Pradesh (Rs. 367.08 lakhs).

NRI investments in rural development

201 SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has cleared the proposal for direct investment by NRIs in rural development programmes without prior approval of the Finance Ministry;

(b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) the response and the details of offers received from the NRIs so far for investment in rural welfare programmes, sector-wise and State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL): (a) and (b) No Sir, The Ministry of Finance issued instruction on 20th Sept., 2002 regarding the procedure for flow of funds from Non Resident Indians (NRIs) and